

I. AMENDMENT

In the Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A pet step comprising:

5 a high-density foam core of a three-dimensional shape, said high-density foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction, and said core defining a bottom,

a cover removably mounted to said core, said cover being constructed from a fabric having a relatively high coefficient of friction and having a plurality of seams arranged therein so as to define a bag shape with an opening therein,

10 an elastic band mounted to the cover at said opening, said cover being fitted around said core such that the band locates entirely within the perimeter of the bottom of the core leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, and

a plurality of fasteners strategically mounted to the fabric cover.

15 Claim 2. (Currently Amended) The pet step of claim 1 wherein the foam core is in the shape of a regular six-sided block defining a top, a bottom, four sides, and ~~four~~ eight corners, said bottom defining four edges, and the cover is mounted on said core such that the opening of the cover locates on the bottom of the core and the elastic band
20 locates within and proximate to the edges of said bottom.

Claim 3. (Original) The pet step of claim 2 wherein the elastic band locates roughly 2 inches within the edges of said bottom.

Claim 4. (Currently Amended) The pet step of claim 1 wherein the foam core is in the shape of a regular six-sided block with ~~four~~ eight corners, and the cover includes four seams spaced evenly around said opening and extending roughly perpendicularly therefrom such that when the cover is fitted onto the core, the seams correspond to the corners of the block.

Claim 5. (Currently Amended) The pet step of claim 1 wherein the foam core is in the shape of a regular six-sided block with a top, a bottom, four sides, and ~~four~~ eight corners, said bottom defining four edges and the cover is mounted on said core such that the opening of the cover locates on the bottom of the core and the elastic band locates within and proximate to the edges of said bottom and the seams correspond to the corners of the block.

Claim 6. (Currently Amended) The pet step of claim 5 wherein said fasteners comprise hook-and-loop fasteners and are strategically and permanently mounted on the cover.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) The pet step of claim 5 6 wherein said fasteners are mounted on the elastic band.

Claim 8. (Original) The pet step of claim 1 wherein the foam core is in the shape of a regular right wedge defining a bottom.

Claim 9. (Original) The pet step of claim 1 wherein the foam core is in the shape of a six-sided trapezoidal block defining a bottom.

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) An article of furniture for pets comprising:

5 a first pet step comprising a high-density foam core of three-dimensional shape, said high-density foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction, and defining a bottom, a cover removably mounted to said core, said cover being constructed from a fabric having a relatively high coefficient of friction and having a plurality of seams arranged therein so as to define a bag shape with an opening therein, an elastic band
10 mounted to the cover at said opening, said cover being fitted around said core such that the band locates entirely within the perimeter of the bottom of the core leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, and a plurality of fasteners permanently mounted to the cover,

a second pet step comprising a high-density foam core of three-dimensional
15 shape, said high-density foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction, and defining a bottom, a cover removably mounted to said core, said cover being constructed from a fabric having a relatively high coefficient of friction and having a plurality of seams arranged therein so as to define a bag shape with an opening therein, an elastic band mounted to the cover at said opening, said cover being fitted around said core such that
20 the band locates entirely within the perimeter of the bottom of the core leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, and a plurality of fasteners permanently mounted to the cover, and

said second pet step being removably mounted to the first pet step such that the bottom of the second step, including the exposed area of the core, mates with and is adjacent the cover of the first step and the fasteners therebetween are engaged.

- 5 Claim 11. (Currently Amended) The article of furniture of claim 10 wherein the fasteners comprise hook-and-loop fasteners and are permanently mounted in strategic locations to the mating surfaces of the adjoining blocks.

Claim 12. (Original) The article of furniture of claim 11 wherein each hook-and-loop
10 fastener comprises a hook portion and a loop portion and the hook portion is mounted to the cover of the first block and the loop portion is mounted to the cover of the second block such that the portions will mate upon assembly.

- Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The article of furniture of claim 12 further comprising a
15 third pet step, such third pet step comprising a high-density foam core of three-dimensional shape, said high-density foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction, and defining a bottom, a cover removably mounted to said core, said cover being constructed from a fabric having a relatively high coefficient of friction and having a plurality of seams arranged therein so as to define a bag shape with an opening therein,
20 an elastic band mounted to the cover at said opening, said cover being fitted around said core such that the band locates entirely within the perimeter of the bottom of the core leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, and a plurality of hook-and-loop fasteners permanently mounted to the cover, and the steps

being removably mounted adjacent each other and arranged into a stair such that the hook-and-loop fasteners, having a hook portion and a loop portion, are mated and engaged.

5 Claim 14. (Currently Amended) A method for constructing a pet stair from a plurality of pet steps, each such step comprising a high-density foam core of three-dimensional shape, said high-density foam having a relatively high coefficient of friction, and each core defining a bottom, a cover removably mounted to said core, said cover being constructed from a fabric having a relatively high coefficient of friction and having a
10 plurality of seams arranged therein so as to define a bag shape with an opening therein, and an elastic band mounted to the cover at said opening, said cover being fitted around said core such that the band locates entirely within the perimeter of the bottom of the core leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, comprising the steps of:

15 assembling the individual pet steps to be used by fitting the covers on the cores so that the seams generally locate on the corners of the cores and the bands locate entirely within the perimeters of the bottoms of the cores leaving a substantial area of the bottom of the core uncovered and exposed, and

arranging the pet steps adjacent each other in a stair configuration as desirable
20 so that the bottom of at least one step, including the exposed portion of the core, is adjacent the cover of at least one step.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 wherein the steps further
comprise hook-and-loop fasteners permanently mounted on the covers, each fastener
having a hook portion and a loop portion, and the method further comprising the step of:
fastening the pet steps to each other by securing the hook portion of a hook-and-
5 loop fastener to the corresponding loop portion of a mating hook-and-loop fastener,
thereby engaging the fasteners.

Claim 16. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the foam cores are of regular six-
sided block shape and the steps are arranged in a three-step stair.

10 Claim 17. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the foam cores are of regular six-
sided block shape and the steps are arranged in a four-step stair.

Claim 18. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein the foam cores are of regular six-
15 sided block shape and the steps are arranged in a six-step stair.

Claim 19. (Original) The method of claim 15 wherein at least one of the steps is in the
shape of a right wedge and the steps are arranged in a ramped configuration.

20 Claim 20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein at least one of the steps is in the
shape of a trapezoidal block and the steps are arranged in a ramped configuration.

Please reconsider claims 1-20 as discussed below.